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ABSTRACT

In this issue of the newsletter the following documents, written in English, are presented: four documents on the reform of secondary education, at present under study, in France; for Sweden, a summary on the report made of organization and structure--the working conditions in schools; from Switzerland, the concluding chapter of the opinion of the Swiss Science Council on the report regarding secondary education of the future; and from the United Kingdom, a statement of policy on behalf of the Labour Party related to the principles of educational policy. (EB)

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News-letter/Faits Nouveaux has, since 1971, reserved each year a special issue to reprinting excerpts from important documents on national education policy (see Nos 4/1971, 4/1972 and 4/1973).

For this year we have selected for this last issue of 1974 the following documents :

- France : four documents on the reform, at present under study, of the education system. The reform was initiated by J. FONTANET, and continued on a broader basis and with new accents by his successor as Education Minister, R. HABY since May 1975. Although this reform has not yet reached the stage of legislation, we feel that already the documents at present available are of great general interest. We reprint two documents in an English version prepared by the Secretariat of the Council of Europe, for the benefit of our English language readers assuming that French language readers are already familiar with them.

- Sweden : a summary in English prepared by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs on the "Skolans Arbetsmiljö", the report by a committee of experts set up to investigate and make recommendations on how to improve the internal functioning of the school (Utredningar, 1974, 952 p.). We consider this document to be of particular importance. The report shows that reforms of organisation and structure are not sufficient to solve the tasks with which school is today confronted. The report proposes radical changes in the inner life and work of the school. This theme will dominate the educational debates of the years to come whatever the political and economic context may be.

- Switzerland : the concluding chapter of the opinion of the Swiss Science Council on the Report "Secondary Education Tomorrow". This report was prepared by an expert committee on behalf of the Swiss Conference of cantonal directors of education and published in 1972/1973. It is still widely discussed and constitutes the basis of a number of cantonal reform plans. (For excerpts of the report see News-letter 4/1973). The Swiss Science Council in its opinion stresses in particular the necessary linkage between the reform of secondary and of post-secondary education which in all countries has proved extremely difficult to establish.

- United Kingdom : a statement of education policy on behalf of the Labour Party made immediately prior to the October 1974 general election. The statement draws attention to the deliberate changes in emphasis made by the then Labour government and outlines the principles which would guide a future Labour government in educational matters. As the October election was won by the Labour Party, the principles and aims listed have become those that will determine the development of education in the United Kingdom in the immediate future.

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Chaque année depuis 1971 un numéro spécial de News-Letter/Faits Nouveaux est consacré à la reproduction d'extraits des documents majeurs de politique nationale en matière d'éducation (voir N° 4/1971, 4/1972 et 4/1973).

Cette année nous avons choisi pour ce dernier numéro de 1974 les documents suivants :

- France : quatre documents sur la réforme, actuellement à l'étude, du système d'éducation. Cette réforme a été amorcée par J. FONTANET et poursuivie, sur une base plus étendue et avec de nouveaux accents, par R. HABY, son successeur au Ministère de l'Education depuis mai 1974. Bien que cette réforme ne se soit pas encore traduite en loi, nous sommes de l'avis que les documents actuellement disponibles, présentent un intérêt général réel. Nous reproduisons, à l'intention de nos lecteurs anglophones, deux documents dans une version anglaise préparée par le Secrétariat du Conseil de l'Europe (nos lecteurs francophones connaissant probablement déjà les documents en question).

- Suède : un résumé en anglais, préparé par le Ministère de l'Education et des Affaires culturelles, de "Skolans Arbetsmiljö", rapport d'une commission d'experts établie pour examiner le fonctionnement interne de l'école et faire des recommandations en vue d'une amélioration (Utredningar, 1974, 952 p.). A nos yeux ce document a une importance toute particulière. Le rapport démontre que des réformes d'organisation et de structure ne suffisent pas pour résoudre les tâches auxquelles l'école d'aujourd'hui doit faire face. Le rapport propose des changements radicaux dans la vie interne et le travail de l'école. Cet aspect dominera les débats sur l'éducation dans les années à venir quel que soit le contexte politique et économique.

- Suisse : le chapitre final de la prise de position du Conseil suisse de la science au sujet du rapport "Enseignement secondaire de demain". Ce rapport a été établi par un comité d'experts pour la Conférence des directeurs cantonaux de l'instruction publique et publié en 1972/73. Il donne toujours lieu à de nombreuses discussions et constitue la base d'un certain nombre de projets de réforme de la part des cantons. (voir News-Letter/Faits Nouveaux 4/1973 pour des extraits de ce rapport). Dans sa prise de position, le Conseil suisse souligne surtout le lien essentiel entre la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire et celle de l'enseignement post-secondaire qui dans tous les pays s'est révélé extrêmement difficile à établir.

- Royaume-Uni : une déclaration de politique dans le domaine de l'éducation de la part du parti travailliste. Cette déclaration, faite juste avant les élections générales d'octobre 1974, attire l'attention sur les changements voulus d'accent faits par le gouvernement travailliste en place et indique les principes qui guideraient un futur gouvernement travailliste dans le domaine de l'éducation. Les élections d'octobre ayant été remportées par le parti travailliste, les principes et les buts exposés sont devenus ceux qui règleront le développement de l'éducation au Royaume-Uni dans l'avenir immédiat.

Editor : The Director of Education and of Cultural and Scientific Affairs
Editeur : Le Directeur de l'Enseignement et des Affaires culturelles et scientifiques

FRANCE

VERS UNE REFORME GLOBALE

I. En guise d'introduction

Monsieur R. HABY, Ministre de l'Education, poursuit la préparation du projet de loi d'orientation du système éducatif, qui portera sur l'enseignement primaire et secondaire, général et technologique. Dès à présent les grandes orientations du ministre sont connues et annoncent des changements importants.

Le libéralisme pédagogique

En prenant la décision d'abandonner la réforme préparée par son prédécesseur Monsieur J. FONTANET, le ministre soulignait une évidence : il ne pouvait conduire à son terme un projet dont les fondements étaient à l'opposé de ses propres conceptions.

Le projet Fontanet correspondait, en effet, à la vision d'un économiste : il s'agissait d'ajuster le système scolaire aux besoins du marché du travail ; c'est l'orientation des élèves en fonction du contexte social qui était déterminante. D'où une réforme "mécaniste", partant de l'idée d'une sélection à l'entrée de l'enseignement supérieur et descendant les échelons jusqu'à la sixième.

M. HABY, au contraire, déclare que les problèmes des universités ne sont pas les siens. A la rigueur, il se mettra d'accord avec son collègue, M. J.P. SOISSON, pour ajuster la classe terminale aux objectifs de la politique universitaire. Mais un souci inverse l'anime : la progression de l'enfant, l'acquisition pendant la scolarité obligatoire de ce que le président de la République a nommé "le savoir minimum pour tous les Français". Aussi, sa réforme est-elle plus large que celle de M. FONTANET. Elle commence, à l'inverse de la précédente, par l'école maternelle, pour remonter jusqu'au baccalauréat.

Sa vision est essentiellement psycho-pédagogique. Il s'agit de permettre à l'enfant d'aller aussi loin que possible, au rythme qui est le sien, dans l'acquisition des connaissances et la formation de la personnalité. D'où la prise en considération de la notion de "degré d'éveil" ou d'âge mental", qui permet aux plus avancés de sauter des classes et commande que les autres bénéficient d'un enseignement de "soutien". Surtout, le projet du ministre de l'éducation vise à rendre le système plus souple, plus fluide, en supprimant les redoublements et en facilitant le passage d'une étape à l'autre. C'est, en effet, aux "charnières" - de l'école maternelle au cours préparatoire et de l'école primaire à la sixième - que se produisent les blocages les plus importants, avec des taux de redoublement particulièrement élevés.

Ainsi s'éclaire la conception de M. HABY, celle d'un pédagogue "classique". Si le système est correct, estime-t-il, c'est au niveau individuel que les problèmes se posent. Le rôle des enseignants et des familles est alors de faciliter la solution de chacun d'eux. Cette position a été vivement attaquée, depuis de nombreuses années, par ceux qui ont montré les liens entre le système éducatif et le contexte social, et le rôle de l'école comme facteur de ségrégation. Mais, pour le ministre de l'éducation, l'expérience pédagogique - il a été instituteur, professeur, chef d'établissement... - compte davantage que les analyses socio-politiques.

Sélection naturelle

La réforme HABY peut être caractérisée doublement. D'une part, elle améliore la "rentabilité" du système éducatif. Les retards scolaires, les redoublements, les échecs, coûtent cher à l'Etat, aux familles et plus encore aux enfants eux-mêmes, marqués à vie par une mauvaise scolarité : améliorer le fonctionnement de l'ensemble, permettre aux élèves de passer moins de temps, s'ils le peuvent, sur les bancs de l'école, c'est tout bénéfice d'un côté comme de l'autre.

Mais, d'autre part, un tel système réintroduit une sélection, non plus par le biais de filières et de pourcentages mais en fonction de l'âge. Il est probable, en effet, que les enfants des catégories sociales favorisées seront les plus nombreux à entrer au cours préparatoire à cinq ans - sachant déjà lire ou presque - en sixième à dix ans, et à obtenir le baccalauréat complet à dix-sept ans. Les autres feront une scolarité "normale",

sans heurts, sans échec apparent. Mais, au bout du compte, ils se retrouveront encore dans l'enseignement technique court, avec deux sinon trois années de retard sur leurs camarades plus "doués" ou mieux nés.

Il y aura cependant une différence avec ce qui se passe actuellement : ce ne seront plus les structures scolaires elles-mêmes qui engendreront la sélection. Celle-ci sera, en quelque sorte, rejetée sur la société elle-même, qui produit les inégalités socio-économiques. Une sélection "naturelle" s'opère par la notion d'"âge mental". L'école prend en compte les inégalités individuelles, elle ne les organise pas dans des structures.

Dans l'idéal, un tel objectif est sans doute préférable au maintien ou à l'aggravation des filières ségrégatives. Mais à une condition : que le contenu de l'enseignement soit entièrement rénové. Dans le système actuel, ce qui compte, c'est l'acquisition de connaissances formelles et, dans le secondaire, la possibilité d'aborder des degrés d'abstraction de plus en plus élevés, avec une tendance constante à l'encyclopédisme dans les programmes. Une telle organisation donne, une fois encore, l'avantage aux enfants des milieux favorisés. Que l'on oriente différemment les contenus de l'enseignement, et ce dès l'école élémentaire, en faisant la place à une pédagogie plus concrète, à l'éducation sportive et artistique, aux sciences expérimentales, à la technologie, etc. et les inconvénients d'un système fluide seront moins nets. Mais ce serait un total renversement, qui a peu de chances de pouvoir être accepté tant par les parents d'élèves que par la majorité des enseignants. Et qui demanderait des moyens financiers considérables.

Le Monde, 13-XII-1974

II. A shelved reform - the Fontanet project

In January 1974 the Council of Ministers approved the main lines of a reform of secondary education proposed by Mr. Fontanet, then Minister of Education. The principles of the reform were established in the light of the results of extensive consultation in the form of public opinion polls, surveys, a national conference and hearings of parents' associations and teachers' unions. They were based, too, on the work of the Joxe Committee and on the studies carried out at the Ministry's request by Professor Raymond Barre, on the comparison of solutions adopted in countries, especially in Europe, for linking secondary education and higher education. These reform plans reflected the government's main political choices but were only guidelines calling for many complementary measures and adjustments.

I. ORGANISATION AND TEACHING METHODS

LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

Great equality of opportunity

The proposals relating to lower secondary education, i.e., the first cycle, are based on the desire to give all children entering secondary education greater equality of opportunity and more effective guidance.

The first proposal is a major reform of the collège d'enseignement secondaire (CES) and its rural version the collège d'enseignement général (CEG). Set up in 1963 with the raising of the school-leaving age to 16, their purpose was to combine the old educational establishments catering for the first to fourth year pupils (6e-3e inclusive), i.e. the lower classes of the lycées, the cours complémentaires and the former school leavers' classes. Making, in this way, secondary education available to all French children was a great educational achievement of the Fifth Republic. A vast building programme has been in progress throughout the country in recent years, providing new schools at the rate of one a day and establishing a complete network of new-type schools extending into the most remote districts. Considerable thought has been given to developing mass-teaching methods at this level. (Even in 1950 only 30 % of all children received a secondary education).

However, this reform did not achieve its full goal. In its present state it is, in effect, still much more of a juxtaposition under one roof rather than a merger of the previous structures. Each of the three CES sections among which pupils are distributed according to their age and ability continue to correspond to one of the three old institutions, especially with regard to differences in status and professional obligations of the teaching staff - certificated teachers and those who have obtained the agrégation for section I, general secondary teachers for section II and primary level teachers for section III.

This has given rise, in practice, to difficulties in fully achieving the objectives of the reform. Despite the efforts made to allow pupils to move from one stream to another, the barriers between sections have proved to be extremely hard to break down. Consequently a child assigned to section III knows in advance that he has little prospect of moving into section II, the more so since the assignment to the various sections of teachers who have received different types of training has inevitably contributed to producing a hierarchy and to making the adaptation of a pupil more difficult upon transfer from one section to another. All in all, unduly rigid streaming of pupils at the beginning of their first year of secondary education is, in practice, too often tantamount to crystallizing a child's situation. In practice, for many children, their fate is wholly or almost wholly decided upon their entry into their first year class. This, in view of the age of the children concerned and of their possibilities of later development, is a serious drawback. Furthermore, practical application of the criteria for distributing children among the three sections meets with considerable difficulties. The system's lack of flexibility, too, is one of the causes of the high percentage of pupils being required to stay in a form a second year, though they are weak, and sometimes only temporarily, in just one or two subjects.

In order to cope with these difficulties, a number of principles have been laid down.

Discontinuance of the present sections

In order to enable all pupils entering lower secondary school to be taught by teachers with the same qualifications and no longer be assigned to rigid and graded sections, a single corps of lower secondary school teachers will be constituted. This means that henceforth all appointments will be made within this new corps and that the P.E.G.C. (teachers at Collèges of General Education), and section III teachers at present holding these posts will, providing they satisfy given conditions, be able to join the new corps.

... by establishing a single corps of lower secondary school teachers ...

These lower secondary school teachers will specialise in two subjects and therefore assist pupils in making the transition from the class teacher in the primary school to the subject teacher characteristic of a lycée education.

... in future, certificated teachers and those with the agrégation will be responsible for upper secondary education only ...

The "certifiés" and "agrégés" will then teach exclusively in upper secondary schools, since it is only at this level that pupils can derive full benefit from the teacher's specialisation.

It will be seen that the government has not adopted the extreme solution suggested by the Joxe report whereby there would be a single corps of teachers for both upper and lower secondary education. Indeed, the government considered that this would be not only very difficult to achieve but debatable in its very principle. As now envisaged, the creation of a single corps of lower secondary teachers is a major step towards the collèges d'enseignement secondaire achieving their final form and playing their role fully. Furthermore, this organisation of two corps will avoid the lack of continuity which marks at the present the primary and secondary teaching systems and provide better opportunities of promotion for the different categories of teachers.

... but an attempt will be made to adapt teaching to pupils' abilities

However, there is not just one method suitable for all children. It would be harmful to expect children to make progress by casting them all in the same mould when they have different abilities, attitudes and learning speeds. Differentiation of teaching is essential if the principle of equality of opportunity is to be respected ; the principle does not mean that pupils should all be given the same teaching, rather that teaching should take account of the needs of each of them.

A balanced solution must be sought, based on these two considerations. The importance is apparent of observations being made in 17 experimental collèges d'enseignement secondaire where the three sections have been eliminated and replaced by a system of heterogeneous or semi-heterogeneous classes, allowing in some subjects only (French, mathematics, first modern language) for a redistribution of pupils in groups by subject level, pupils being able to move from one group to another according to their progress. This important aspect of teaching organisation, which is a matter for decree rather than law, is one which will require thorough concertation within the framework of the guiding principles of the reform.

Assistance for pupils in difficulty

Whatever the final solution adopted, it will have to embody special assistance for pupils in difficulty. Energetic steps will be taken to do away with abusive recourse to the practice of retaining pupils in a form for a second year. The unduly high number of pupils so retained in France, compared with other countries, is one of the worst aspects of our education system. It results in considerable overloading of the school population and is accompanied by corresponding additional heavy expenditure. It raises the age of the school population which leads to serious disadvantages in the upper classes of lycées and at universities (60 % of pupils in the final class of the lycée are over 17 years of age ; the average age on completion of the lycée course is 19). It is of no real benefit to pupils, since surveys carried out on the progress of a class of pupils show that those who have too often been held back for a second year do not really and truly acquire lasting additional benefit and incur, as a result, prejudicial delay in preparing for life.

Elimination of repeating a year

The new system must therefore preclude any need in the course of a cycle for a pupil to remain in a form a second year for all subjects. The system must be sufficiently flexible to allow pupils to follow their normal course of study, even if they are weak in one or two subjects, this weakness in some cases being only momentary.

This will mean that the form system will have to be less rigid and that the aforementioned measures of compensation and assistance be conceived to do away with the need for certain pupils to stay in a form for a second year.

However, those pupils likely truly to benefit from an additional year for purposes of consolidating their knowledge before the important choice of option at the end of the first cycle, i.e. lower secondary education, will be given the opportunity to do so.

The options hitherto available at the end of the second year of lower secondary education will be retained so that pupils more suited to practical work than to theoretical study will be able to transfer either to technical schools or to the new pre-vocational or pre-apprenticeship classes. But under the new system such pupils will no longer seem to have technical or manual occupations imposed upon them, since in the course of the preceding two years they will have been able to choose very freely among several courses so as to have every opportunity of determining the best suited to them.

Reform and lightening of programmes ; shorter lessons

Lastly, the reorganisation of lower secondary education will allow of a thorough reform of teaching methods. For children in this age group, the reform must be combined with lighter programmes enabling lessons and the number of school hours a week to be shortened. This will partly be made up by a better use of the third term.

Child health specialists all deprecate the present overburdening of children with school work at a time when they are in full growth, insufficient sleep, even if this is partly due to television, and no time for play and dreaming so necessary at this age. Educationalists criticize, too, the inflated nature of some programmes and their unrealistic and outdated pretentiously encyclopaedic approach. Children at this age are not capable of exercising attention for very long ; they need to consolidate their still shaky basic knowledge and to acquire good working habits and means of expression rather than have to take in a surfeit of intellectual nourishment.

France will therefore adopt timetables similar to those in general use in other countries.

UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

The present organisation of upper secondary education, i.e. the second cycle, in which several baccalauréat courses are studied in a number of distinct sections from the beginning of the fifth year has serious drawbacks: it obliges children to engage prematurely in an advanced specialization all the more paradoxical, since later on the first cycle at university is to some extent again multi-disciplinary. It results in training of very inequal quality for the same diploma. Some courses such as that leading to the letters-languages baccalauréat are soft options taken by a large number of pupils who are solely intent upon obtaining a baccalauréat qualification of any kind, without aptitude or particular vocation for the discipline they are studying. It is precisely in these weak sections, which offer the most uncertain outlets, that the baccalauréat is most liberally awarded, with large numbers of young people consequently being led into initial higher education courses which are of least value to themselves and to society.

The reform of upper secondary education is, then, based on three main ideas :

- to offer young people better guidance by reducing the number of baccalauréat sections, by bringing into line the levels of teaching in the various sections and by making the new baccalauréat a valid means of guidance ;
- to give young people a greater responsibility in conducting their studies and through a system offering a choice of studies encourage them to exercise self-guidance by the choice of their section and by a wide range of options within each section supplementing a nucleus of common subjects ;
- to open up education to the contemporary world, particularly by introducing all pupils to economics and technology.

The general purpose of these measures is to contribute to opening up and revalorizing technological education on the lines of the principles laid down by the 1971 law. As a result of the introductory course, communication between general and technical education, and greater efforts to promote technical education, pupils receiving general education will no longer consider technology as a world apart.

Since a general reform of technological education was carried out less than three years ago, the new measures will, of course, apply mainly to the long general second cycle (i.e. upper secondary). (It will be recalled that at the end of their fourth year pupils have three options : the short upper secondary programme with a bias towards technology, the long upper secondary technical programme, and the long upper secondary general programme).

A large reduction in the number of baccalauréat sections ...

In accordance with the above principle, there will be only two sections in the long upper secondary technological programme (industrial technology and economic technology) and three sections in the long upper secondary general programme (one with a bias towards literary studies and philosophy, another with a bias towards economics and the social sciences and the third with a bias towards mathematics and experimental sciences). These sections will themselves comprise a nucleus of common subjects, with sets of options. The fifth year will provide guidance in choosing one of the three sections for entry to the sixth year, the teaching given during this investigatory period making an initial but not irreversible differentiation possible.

The sections will be balanced in respect of education level and degree of difficulty of their programme so as to avoid recreating soft options, which in fact lead nowhere. Pupils will also have a freedom of choice which is not at present possible.

In addition to remedying the defects of the present system, the introduction of options will have very positive consequences : they will do more to arouse the interest of pupils who, in the modern world, are more precocious and independent, accustomed as they are by audio-visual media to a lively and attractive presentation of information and often find unduly traditional teaching methods deadly dull. Above all, they will be encouraged to think well in advance about the direction their careers will take and to determine it themselves, progressively, by a series of responsible choices. This is essential if young people are to have greater participation in an effective guidance policy.

THE BACCALAUREAT

Without doing away with the baccalauréat, which would have raised many very difficult problems, the new upper secondary system uses it as a means of guidance, a function it but rarely fulfils at present. To achieve this end, the examination is to be largely reorganised.

The baccalauréat is retained but in a very different form

With upper secondary education becoming a period of progressive self-determination and the pupil himself being able to choose the disciplines for which he feels he has greatest ability and inclination, it is logical that in the school-leaving examination he should be required to give proof of having reached an above-average level in the subjects to which he has freely given priority and reflecting the ultimate purpose he has himself decided his studies shall serve. It is therefore consistent, under the new organisation of upper secondary education, to adopt a solution based partially on the "subject level" baccalauréat, as it is called in some countries, that is to say, where account is taken not only of the general average obtained by the candidate but also of his marks in the main subjects in which he intends to pursue his studies.

In practice, the candidate's marks in the baccalauréat, which will be taken in conditions very similar to current practice, will be used twice. Furthermore, examiners will continue to work out the general average mark which will still determine the successful completion of secondary education.

Access to higher education is no longer automatic, but depends on the marks obtained in the subjects chosen by the pupil

Passing the baccalauréat will, however, no longer suffice for entry to one of the first cycles of higher education. It will, in addition, be necessary to have obtained sufficiently high marks in each of the recognised main subjects of the university cycle to which the candidate wishes to be admitted. Entrance requirements for the various first cycles of higher education will be laid down in regulations. Comparison of the candidate's qualifications as determined by the marks he has obtained with entrance requirements will determine which courses of university training are open to him. As autonomous institutions, the universities may, subject to conditions, lay down entrance requirements other than standard requirements or waive requirements in individual cases.

Intensive vocational training for pupils not continuing their studies

Candidates who fail to pass the baccalauréat or candidates who pass but whose marks are not high enough to meet university entrance requirements and who have exhausted the possibilities of repeating a year at school may, upon request, take intensive vocational training courses as part of a planned career. This training, not exceeding one year, may be organised in collaboration with professional circles in a tripartite context based on that of crash vocational training programmes.

Steps will be taken to determine for which civil service examinations the need to have passed the baccalauréat may be dispensed with, on the understanding that this shall not affect the level of these competitions or the qualification they provide.

In this way France, which is the only large developed country to have a school-leaving certificate which at the same time constitutes the first grade of higher education, will bring its education system more into line with that of its principal partners. In this way it will, too, be possible more effectively to resolve the problem of the university first cycle where, as a result of the lack of efficient guidance upon entry, selection of the worst kind prevails, namely that which, unacknowledged and belated, leads, according to the main subjects taken, to 40 % - 50 % of the students being eliminated because they fail their examinations or abandon their studies without obtaining a diploma. The new system will to some extent establish between the end of upper secondary education and university entrance a new opportunity for guidance, and this is indeed logical, having regard to the importance of the decisions to be taken at that stage. It will, moreover, be genuine guidance, reflecting as it will the process of self-determination from now on a feature of upper secondary education, and because new channels will be open at this level, expecially in the form of short complementary training enabling the young people concerned to adapt themselves and gain due benefit from their initial training upon entry to active life.

Simplification of baccalauréat examination procedure and greater importance of school records

Lastly, examination procedure for the baccalauréat will be simplified, and there will be a measure of decentralization in order to eliminate current disturbance in schools as a result of the examinations held during the third term. It will be possible to take better account of school work by consulting school records which might be accompanied by a school records digest in respect of each pupil for the oral.

These reforms must be accompanied by energetic steps to introduce new teaching methods (with greater appeal to the personal initiative and efforts of the pupil through independent work made possible by allotting minimum hours of teaching for each subject) and by curriculum reform.

Curriculum reform

It has not been possible to make any progress in the past few months in the study of reforming the content of the main disciplines because of the substantial changes to be made in the schedule of subjects as a result of reforming the sections and introducing options. A house cannot be furnished until its plan is known. This work of reform can now be resumed along more clearly defined lines, which will not, however, be hard-and-fast, since they will be open to modification and adjustment, if necessary, to take account of any comments of subject specialists and special committees. The large committees which have been set up to study the conditions of reform of the principal disciplines will be asked to undertake their work with this in mind. Opening up education to the contemporary world will be one of the aspects with which they will be concerned.

II. THE TEACHERS : SERVICE OBLIGATIONS AND TRAINING

There can be no education without teachers. Every educational reform requires their active collaboration. This is why such a comprehensive reform of secondary education cannot be carried out without affecting the training and working conditions of teachers.

Service obligations

In France, unlike in other countries, teachers' career obligations are defined solely in terms of the number of teaching hours. This formula no longer meets the present demands of the educational world, which imply broader concertation among teachers, called upon to a greater extent to work in teams, and more frequent contacts, especially in respect of guidance, among teachers, pupils and parents. Though many teachers devote part of their time, occasionally a large part, to these complementary activities, the time so spent is not counted as teaching hours and cannot today be included and co-ordinated within the school's timetable.

A reduction in the number of teaching hours in lower secondary education will provide teachers with free time in their service obligations as at present defined and offers a fine opportunity to deal with the problem. The teachers' organisations will therefore be consulted for the purpose of seeking the most appropriate solution.

Establishment of training centres for secondary school teachers

Educational reform depends on improving and adapting teacher training. It was recognized several years ago that future teachers must receive their training in centres set up for this purpose. In these centres they will prepare for the recruitment examinations which will be the only means of gaining admission to the teaching profession either in lower or in upper secondary education. In order to promote sufficient effort and foster a spirit of emulation, and to redirect trainees who prove to be unsuitable for teaching, there will be a slightly higher percentage of students admitted to these training centres than qualified teaching posts available.

Students will be able to sit for entrance examinations to the training centres two years after the baccalauréat.

This will not only ensure that studies are not unduly prolonged, but also that students do not delay too long in making a final career choice. When, as today, the entrance examination is taken on average five or six years after the baccalauréat, the task of redirection of studies is very difficult in cases of failure, and many young people waste precious years to no avail ; at the same time, in higher education, university faculties, especially arts faculties, are over-crowded to no purpose.

... with admission by competitive examination two years after the baccalauréat ...

If nothing is done, the situation will become even worse, since, having regard to the age structure of the teaching profession, few new teachers are needed, most teachers having been recruited fairly recently. With a falling birthrate and a slowing down in the numbers of pupils voluntarily staying on at school after the age of 16, expansion needs are smaller. In 1973 there were only 9,000 posts for 70,000 CAPES (Certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré) and agrégation candidates. Even fewer posts would have been available in three or four years, if no reform had been carried out. For students one of the very positive aspects of the new measures will be to ensure that the total number of teaching vacancies in lower and secondary education will match or even exceed the current level of recruitment by the CAPES and the agrégation.

In order to make it easier for students to change courses, the teacher recruitment examinations might be based on a programme compatible with that of the DEUG (first diploma, after two years of study) allowing of simultaneous preparation for both types of examination and not prejudicing in any way the general and multidisciplinary nature of the university first cycle. Moreover, if teachers are in future to be trained for interdisciplinary teaching, it will be expedient for them not to embark on undue specialization forthwith.

... and which will train at different levels : lower secondary teachers, certifiés and agrégés

Transitory measures and special provisions will, of course, be made for teachers not holding permanent appointments (maîtres auxiliaires) who fulfil the conditions for admission to the training centres.

The examinations for both future upper and lower secondary school teachers will therefore be open to students at the same stage in their courses, but with, of course, different entrance qualifications and length of study. Students will be able to enter for both examinations simultaneously, which will preserve their freedom of choice and ensure that they have a variety of openings.

Agrégés will be recruited by competitive examination which will be open to the best students from the training centres for certifiés, who will be able to take an additional year's training, as well as to lower secondary or certificated teachers and to students of the higher teacher training colleges (écoles normales supérieures).

In all cases, recruitment by internal promotion will be possible. Thus many primary school teachers (instituteurs) will be able to enter training centres for lower secondary education teachers, thereby considerably widening their present prospects of promotion.

The training centres will be set up by agreement with the universities which will, in accordance with the law on higher education, have a key role to play. The pedagogic or "vocational" training of the future teachers will occupy an important place in the centres' teaching programme, largely based on an analysis of the problems which student teachers face when their periods of teaching practice, during which they exercise full responsibility, bring them into real contact with children.

Lastly, efforts to improve and adapt training will not be limited to facilities for future teachers. Teachers in schools should be given more and more extensively the benefit of in-service training in order that they may improve and bring their knowledge up-to-date, contribute more effectively to educational reform and ensure prospects of promotion through the career opportunities which will concurrently be made available to them.

III. THE SCHOOL AS AN INSTITUTION : THE ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION, THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION OF ITS MEMBERS

The reform would be incomplete if it did not also apply to the legal and administrative framework of secondary schools. The school is the place where teaching takes place, that is to say, the dispensing of education. The vast national education apparatus exists, in short, only for this purpose, but the decentralisation of educational policy requires that its status be amended. If education is to show vitality, the school must be able to display initiative and, consequently, to assume responsibility.

There is, indeed, great need to clarify and simplify the status of secondary schools, and this is true, too, of the rules for their financial management and their budgetary relations with the State and with local authorities.

This aspect of the reform ought also to improve the distribution of responsibility between the administrative bodies within the school. In order to develop an educational community which can benefit from decentralisation measures, it is essential to strengthen the role of the head of the establishment and to give him powers and responsibilities in the pedagogic sphere, too. At the same time the powers of the school board must be recognized and the conditions of the board's operation more precisely defined in order that it may be rendered more effective.

Lastly, the duties and rights of the various categories of members of the school community must be gone into and consideration be given to measures to facilitate communication between them and the hierarchical administration of the Ministry of Education. This body of measures will be completed by reform of the role of the Inspectorate General.

x x x

As will be seen, the stakes are high ; since the reform sets out to achieve considerable progress towards equality of educational opportunity, a better balance between the various lines of study, less delay and fewer wrong choices at school and university, elimination of education barriers and dead-end training, more effective guidance enabling young people better to assume their responsibility and choose types of training preparing them for their future, education of a more lively nature and offering a better vision of contemporary life, for teachers a new type of training fully adapted to all the aspects of their most difficult but essential mission, and greater opportunities of promotion from one body of teachers to another.

Full implementation will inevitably take some time. Several years have in each case been necessary to introduce the major educational reforms carried out since the Third Republic, and indeed sometimes a decade or more. It is hence all the more necessary to make sure that the present reform is soundly based on tried and tested principles, in order that it may not be exposed to hazards at any stage of its development.

We have seen the important repercussions this reform of secondary education will have on higher education. But elementary and pre-school education will not be neglected in this reform effort. It will above all be directly concerned as regards research into educational assistance and compensatory education, allowing the hitherto usual solution of requiring pupils in difficulty to stay in a class a second year to be dispensed with. It will accordingly be expedient to examine the conditions of training of primary school teachers. The research will be carried out in close collaboration with the authorities responsible for primary education, and the conclusions arrived at together will be valid for both levels of education.

Ministère de l'Education Nationale, Informations rapides, numéro spécial, 16-I-1974.

Translation : Council of Europe

III. Principles of the reform at present under study

At the end of the Sèvres meeting of Inspectors General in October 1974, Mr. HABY spoke at length, for the first time, on the question of curriculum reform, this being as vital as a change in structures to the proposed reform of elementary and secondary education.

The Minister drew attention to the exploratory nature of his remarks. They were intended only as a starting-point for general discussion, which had to "provide the living tissue for preparation of reform".

With regard to pre-school education, he intended to increase equality of opportunity by increasing capacity. There was a problem of co-ordination between nursery schools and primary schools : the present lack of harmonisation resulted all too often in many children having to take some of the early years of elementary education twice. He wanted nursery schools to give more support to the children who needed it most, by placing greater emphasis on acquisition of techniques of expression

In elementary education the aim would be to pay greater attention than in the past to the fact that some children mature more quickly than others. Teaching of the basic techniques - reading, writing and arithmetic - though essential, needed some modification. This was particularly true of spelling, where simplification might be considered. The teaching of modern mathematics should no longer concentrate on abstraction but should help foster a logical approach. Lastly, the teaching of vocabulary, the enrichment of means of expression and methods of arts and sports education called for thought about what training should include.

As to lower secondary education, the greatest novelty was the idea of the middle school corresponding to the present first and second grades (6ème and 5ème). This stage of education should not be solely a preparation for the still distant "baccalauréat". The aim should be that even children who were not going to stay on at school should receive all the knowledge they required in modern society, whatever their place in it. Every French child needed a thorough training which would enable him in due course to become a "citizen of the year 2000".

This middle school would cover two years at first and might subsequently be extended to cover three and later four years, and would admit all pupils without any distinction. The subjects taught would be divided into eight fields of equal importance. In addition to the traditional disciplines - French, mathematics, modern language (which would however be studied entirely from a practical point of view), physical training and sports - new subjects would be introduced :

- art education, aimed at educating taste and at the pursuit of an artistic activity,
- "polytechnic"activities, i.e. a manual and theoretical approach to various techniques,
- study of physical and biological phenomena,
- study of historical, economic and social facts, particularly those connected with children's interests and those the child would meet in his everyday life as an adult (the price mechanism, social security, etc.).

These additional subjects would thus aim to train the young to a kind of "humanism of modern times".

In the early stages there would be two sectors in the third and fourth grades (4ème and 3ème), one more general and the other with a vocational slant, though the scope of the training would not differ appreciably from what had been described for the two preceding years.

Upper secondary education would be marked by the introduction of optional subjects. For example, in the fifth and sixth grades (seconde and première), there would be common training in compulsory scientific and literary subjects with the same standard for everyone and also optional disciplines which would take up about a third of the available time and make it possible to study certain fields in depth. All pupils would be introduced to the study of philosophy at this stage. In the final grade there would be only optional subjects, with 6-10 hours a week on each subject. The subjects selected would be studied in depth with a view either to a career or to university studies.

The Inspectors General were asked to give thought to this broad outline and make suggestions on it in the weeks ahead. Working parties would be set up towards the end of the year to make practical proposals for timetables and the subject-matter to be covered by each discipline. Specialist associations would be represented on them.

Ministère de l'Education, Notes d'Information, N° 74-3, 31-X-74

Translation : Council of Europe

IV. Le projet de réforme - Vue d'ensemble des orientations

LES ENSEIGNEMENTS PRE-ELEMENTAIRE ET ELEMENTAIRE

L'enseignement préélémentaire - qui resterait facultatif - serait divisé en deux parties (deux à quatre ans et quatre à six ans), la seconde devant préparer les enfants aux apprentissages de base - lecture, écriture, calcul - qui serait ensuite entrepris méthodiquement, comme c'est le cas actuellement au cours préparatoire.

L'idée lancée par Mme A. LESUR, secrétaire d Etat, d'adjoindre aux institutrices des écoles maternelles des "aides éducatrices" (cf. News-letter/Faits Nouveaux 4/74) semble aujourd'hui avoir peu de chances d'être retenue dans le projet. D'une part, cette idée provoque parmi les syndicats et les associations spécialisées de vives réactions d'hostilité et, d'autre part, les inégalités qu'engendre son application vont à l'encontre de la philosophie générale du projet du ministre, qui est de supprimer dans le système éducatif lui-même des facteurs sélectifs.

L'enseignement élémentaire lui-même durerait six ans au lieu de cinq actuellement : deux années de cours préparatoire (au lieu d'une), deux années de cours élémentaire, deux années de cours moyen. Les redoublements seraient totalement supprimés, le premier trimestre étant consacré à des révisions de l'année précédente. L'année préparatoire supplémentaire permettrait aux enfants n'ayant pas acquis en un an les mécanismes fondamentaux - il y avait 20 % de redoublants en cours préparatoire l'année dernière - de faire cet apprentissage en deux ans. En outre, l'entrée dans le cycle élémentaire ne serait plus fixée de manière stricte à six ans, mais pourrait se faire dans la tranche d'âge de cinq à sept ans, suivant l'"éveil" intellectuel et psychologique de l'enfant.

Si la scolarité "moyenne" est allongée d'un an, les élèves pourront en revanche "sauter une ou plusieurs classes" avant l'enseignement secondaire. Ainsi, un élève "doué" aura la possibilité non seulement d'accomplir sa scolarité primaire en cinq ans, mais encore de la commencer plus tôt (cette possibilité est réduite actuellement à de rares exceptions). Le passage en sixième se ferait alors entre dix et douze ans, selon les cas. Les élèves qui, à treize ans, ne pourraient effectuer normalement le passage seraient éventuellement regroupés dans des "classes de maturation", proches des anciennes "classes de fin d'études" aujourd'hui disparues.

L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE DU PREMIER CYCLE AUX COLLEGES

Il aurait pour objectif l'acquisition d'un "savoir minimum" avant l'achèvement de la scolarité obligatoire à seize ans. Il constituerait une entité propre et non, comme c'est le cas aujourd'hui, une préparation au second cycle. Les filières actuelles seraient supprimées, ainsi que les classes préparatoires à l'apprentissage et les classes pré-professionnelles de niveau mises en place par M. Fontanet.

Entrés au collège entre dix et douze ans, la majorité des élèves moyens en ressortiraient entre quatorze et seize ans. Les retardataires, entrés plus tard et ayant effectué l'année de "maturation", pourraient le quitter à l'issue de la classe de 5e. L'éventualité d'un diplôme à ce niveau, équivalent au certificat d'études primaires, reste en discussion.

Les deux premières années du cycle (6e et 5e) seraient un véritable tronc commun où un enseignement fondamental serait donné à tous les élèves. Il comprendrait notamment : français, langue vivante, mathématiques, sciences humaines, sciences expérimentales (et pas seulement des sciences de la nature comme aujourd'hui), activités polytechniques (technologie, travaux manuels éducatifs...), éducation artistique, éducation physique et sportive.

Les deux années suivantes - 4e et 3e - seraient différenciées en deux sections (A et B) par le biais d'options, les matières de base (les mêmes que ci-dessus) étant identiques dans les deux cas. La section A, avec des enseignements de latin, de grec, de seconde langue vivante notamment, conduirait principalement au second cycle "général et technologique". La section B comporterait des enseignement pré-professionnels (donnés dans les collèges) et conduirait soit à la vie active soit au second cycle "professionnel". Dans l'esprit du ministre, le choix des options en 4e et 3e serait souple, et la distinction entre les deux sections pourrait, dans une étape ultérieure, être atténuée, voire supprimée.

Les "heures" de cours seraient remplacées par des "séquences pédagogiques" de quarante-cinq minutes, pouvant être éventuellement regroupées (éducation physique par exemple). L'enseignement hebdomadaire dans les collèges serait de 30 séquences. Le noyau commun d'enseignement (24 séquences) serait complété par les activités de "soutien" pour les plus faibles et "d'approfondissement" pour les autres. La pratique du "soutien" devrait permettre de supprimer les redoublements pour tout le premier cycle.

L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE DU SECOND CYCLE

Celui-ci serait dispensé dans deux types d'établissements : les "lycées d'enseignement général et technologique" qui conduiraient au baccalauréat et les "lycées d'enseignement professionnel" qui mèneraient aux diplômes de l'enseignement technique.

La double fonction du baccalauréat actuel - diplôme de fin des études secondaires, accès à l'enseignement universitaire - serait dissociée : un "baccalauréat de base" sanctionnerait les deux premières années (seconde et première) ; un diplôme complémentaire serait délivré à la fin d'une classe terminale entièrement optionnelle. L'accès aux universités dépendrait du niveau obtenu dans les options par les élèves, les universités étant libres de leurs exigences dans le cadre d'une réglementation nationale. L'enseignement professionnel ne serait plus accessible avant la fin de la troisième, et les certificats d'aptitude professionnelle en trois ans seraient supprimés.

Enseignement général et technologique

Les lycées d'enseignement général et technologique seraient la structure administrative unique qui remplacerait les lycées classiques et modernes, les lycées techniques et les lycées polyvalents.

Les classes de seconde et de première comporteraient un large enseignement commun (les deux tiers environ de l'horaire) dans les disciplines de base, dont la plupart auront déjà été abordées au collège : français, mathématiques, langues vivantes, sciences et technologie, sciences humaines et initiation au monde contemporain, éducation physique et sportive. L'enseignement de la philosophie, actuellement dispensé en classe terminale, le serait en première, à raison de trois heures au moins par semaine pour tous les élèves. Des options largement diversifiées et souples - on pourrait les abandonner ou en changer à la fin de la seconde - compléteraient le tronc commun. Elles permettraient notamment de retrouver les séries actuelles, pour l'enseignement artistique ou la technologie par exemple.

Le "baccalauréat de base" pourrait être délivré par des jurys académiques sous la responsabilité d'enseignants du secondaire. Ceux-ci prendraient en compte les livrets scolaires des élèves, l'avis des conseils de classe et les résultats à des contrôles de connaissances (examens-tests nationaux) qui seraient organisés en seconde et première, à raison de deux par an. Ce diplôme pourrait ouvrir la voie à des concours de la fonction publique, pour lesquels on demande aujourd'hui le baccalauréat.

Après avoir obtenu le "baccalauréat de base", l'élève choisirait en classe terminale, un certain nombre d'options, en fonction notamment des filières universitaires qu'il aurait l'intention de suivre par la suite. Par le jeu de ces options et de leur groupement, il pourrait obtenir un diplôme terminal à orientation "générale" ou "technologique". L'examen en fin de classe terminale serait organisé sous la responsabilité d'enseignants du supérieur. Il conduirait à l'établissement d'un "descriptif" indiquant le parcours scolaire de l'élève et sa réussite dans les diverses matières et pouvant être utilisé en particulier pour l'entrée à l'université. Le "baccalauréat de base" et le "descriptif" constitueraient le baccalauréat complet.

Il semble donc que l'on s'oriente vers une classe terminale conçue exclusivement comme une préparation aux études supérieures, même pour les options technologiques.

D'autre part, la séparation du baccalauréat en deux parties a, semble-t-il, deux objectifs. D'abord : rendre possible la sortie d'une partie des élèves dès la fin de la classe de première. Pour ce faire, le ministère se préoccupe d'obtenir pour les futurs titulaires du "baccalauréat de base" des possibilités analogues à celles des bacheliers actuels, notamment la possibilité de se présenter aux concours administratifs. Mais il y a de fortes chances que la plupart des élèves admis continuent au moins jusqu'en fin de classe terminale afin d'obtenir un diplôme complet. Deuxième objectif : il s'agit d'instaurer une sélection à l'entrée des universités par le système du "descriptif". L'élève sera appelé à choisir ses options - c'est l'auto-orientation - en fonction de

la filière universitaire qu'il espère suivre. Il saura surtout qu'il lui faudra obtenir dans certaines des options de très bons résultats pour être sûr d'entrer à l'université et pour accéder à l'établissement de son choix.

Enseignement professionnel

Les élèves - qui auront déjà eu une initiation technologique en 6e et 5e, intensifiée en section B en 4e et 3e- pourront faire une, deux ou trois années d'études dans les lycées d'enseignement professionnel, nouvelle appellation des collèges d'enseignement technique. La possibilité d'entrer dans ces établissements à l'issue de la classe de quatrième pour y préparer un certificat d'aptitude professionnelle en trois ans est supprimée :

- en un an, l'élève pourra acquérir le certificat d'éducation professionnelle, comme c'est le cas actuellement ;
- en deux ans, il pourra obtenir un certificat d'aptitude professionnelle ou un brevet d'études professionnelles;
- en trois ans, il pourra préparer un brevet de technicien.

LE RECRUTEMENT, LA FORMATION ET LE SERVICE DES ENSEIGNANTS

Ce problème ainsi que d'éventuelles modifications de leur statut dans le premier cycle ou l'enseignement technique ne sont pas encore définis et font l'objet de discussions avec les organisations représentatives.

En ce qui concerne le premier cycle, la création d'un corps spécial d'enseignants des collèges ainsi que la notion d'équivalence pour les enseignants de ce niveau sont abandonnées.

Actuellement, quatre hypothèses sont discutées, l'une d'entre elles ayant plus de chances d'être retenue. On écarterait en effet, outre la solution de M. Fontanet, celle du Syndicat national des instituteurs (qui préconise que les instituteurs enseignent jusqu'à la fin de la scolarité obligatoire, c'est-à-dire pendant tout le premier cycle) et l'hypothèse inverse qui consisterait à n'avoir dans les collèges que des professeurs certifiés. Il semble qu'on s'oriente vers le maintien de ces derniers dans le premier cycle. Mais à leur côté trouveraient place des "professeurs brevetés".

L'accès à ce corps serait essentiellement réservé aux instituteurs, et les professeurs brevetés auraient accès au corps des certifiés. Les professeurs d'enseignement général des collèges et les maîtres des classes de transition seraient intégrés dans ce nouveau corps.

D'autre part, le "service" des enseignants de premier cycle pourrait être remanié, compte tenu du fait que des "séquences" de quarante-cinq minutes remplaceraient éventuellement les "heures de cours" actuelles. Mais rien n'est encore définitif à ce sujet.

La formation des enseignants serait assurée dans des centres de formation qui recruteraient les candidats sur concours après deux années d'études universitaires (niveau diplôme d'études universitaires générales). La formation académique, dans la discipline choisie, se ferait dans les universités, la formation pédagogique n'étant pas exclusivement universitaire. Un point ne semble pas encore tranché : la localisation de ces centres. Les universités réclament qu'ils leur soient intégrés, mais le ministre de l'éducation préférerait une formule plus souple, selon les établissements et les régions.

Le Monde, 13-XII-1974

SUISSE

PRISE DE POSITION DU CONSEIL SUISSE DE LA SCIENCE AU SUJET DU RAPPORT "ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE DE DEMAIN"

Le Conseil a été invité par la Conférence des directeurs cantonaux de l'instruction publique à se prononcer dans le cadre de la procédure de consultation sur le rapport "Enseignement secondaire de demain". Ce rapport fut élaboré par une commission d'experts créée par la Conférence en 1969. En septembre 1972, il fut soumis à la Conférence et publié par elle. ("Enseignement secondaire de demain," Verlag Huber Frauenfeld, 1972, 188 p. Des extraits de ce rapport ont paru dans News-Letter/Faits Nouveaux 4/73, p. 11 - 20). Nous publions ci-dessous le chapitre "Récapitulation et conclusions" de la prise de position adoptée par le Conseil en mars 1974.

LE PROBLEME GENERAL DE LA REFORME DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE

Nécessité de la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire

Le Conseil de la science se félicite de l'initiative prise par la Conférence des directeurs cantonaux de l'instruction publique en vue d'élaborer des conceptions directrices pour la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire. Il considère cette réforme comme une nécessité. Elle devrait permettre l'élimination des lacunes de l'enseignement actuel en matière de pédagogie, de structure, de contenu, d'organisation et de planification.

Insertion de la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire dans une réforme générale de l'enseignement

Le Conseil attribue une grande importance au fait que sous le thème "réforme de l'enseignement secondaire" on n'ait pas analysé uniquement le gymnase, mais que la structure proposée recouvre tout le secteur allant de la 5ème à la 13e année de scolarité. Eu égard à la portée de la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire envisagée, le conseil est cependant d'avis qu'il conviendrait d'étudier les conséquences à tirer sur la base d'une telle réforme relativement à la réorganisation des domaines d'enseignement contigus et de tout le système d'enseignement suisse.

Dynamique de la réforme de l'enseignement

Il n'y a pas encore en Suisse de tradition d'une réforme globale de l'enseignement. C'est pourquoi il faut non seulement préparer un modèle de structure futur pour un seul secteur de l'enseignement, mais encore déterminer le processus de réforme en tenant compte de toutes les implications. Pour l'essentiel, il s'agit de mieux définir les objectifs, l'articulation future, les caractéristiques qualitatives, les structures et les méthodes de direction ainsi que l'exécution des réformes.

Précision des conditions de la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire relevant de la politique de l'enseignement

L'introduction du modèle de structure présenté présuppose que différentes conditions soient précisées, par exemple la structure générale future de notre enseignement, le développement quantitatif des gymnases dans sa dépendance des objectifs qualitatifs, le financement, les bases juridiques, la réforme de la formation des enseignants, les relations entre la recherche éducationnelle et la réforme scolaire, les fonctions de direction dans le processus d'innovation ainsi que la coordination dans le cadre national.

La fixation de ces conditions, qui devrait s'effectuer par des entretiens entre les experts et les responsables de la décision, en liaison avec l'analyse des implications temporelles et matérielles, devrait déboucher sur une planification détaillée des travaux, décisions et mesures pratiques nécessaires.

LE MODELE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE DE DEMAIN

Le point de départ

Le Conseil de la Science soutient les principes de base du modèle, qui crée des structures aussi perméables que possible et qui permet une organisation plus individuelle de l'enseignement ainsi qu'une accentuation plus grande des objectifs d'apprentissage et de comportement individuels. La mission de l'enseignement secondaire ne peut toutefois être définie dans tous ses aspects par l'enseignement secondaire lui-même. Il est plutôt en harmonie avec notre système que des objectifs importants soient fixés par les responsables de la décision politique.

Degré observation et orientation

Le Conseil de la Science appuie l'idée selon laquelle le système actuel d'orientation vers les études ou la formation professionnelle serait remplacé par une observation et une orientation continues et que des orientations erronées dans la nouvelle structure doivent pouvoir être corrigées sans inconvénients graves pour l'élève. Eu égard aux discussions actuelles en Suisse et à l'étranger, il ne paraît cependant nullement assuré qu'un système d'école globale, tel que s'efforce de la réaliser le degré observation et orientation, atteigne vraiment les objectifs pédagogiques et socio-politiques fixés. En même temps, la grave question se pose de savoir si la réalisation d'un tel modèle peut être judicieuse sans une réforme de la formation des parents, de l'instruction préscolaire et du degré primaire. A la lumière de la recherche moderne en matière d'aptitudes, il paraît douteux que des retards dus aux conditions sociales puissent être encore compensés par le système prévu au niveau de l'enseignement secondaire. Etant donné que des exigences entièrement nouvelles doivent être formulées par le modèle à l'endroit de la formation des enseignants, l'introduction du degré observation et orientation ne devrait pas être entreprise avant que ce problème ait été étudié plus en détail.

Le degré diplôme

La création d'un degré diplôme, telle qu'elle est prévue dans le rapport, paraît particulièrement problématique. D'une part, la place de ce degré diplôme vis-à-vis de la maturité et de l'apprentissage ainsi que de la formation professionnelle supérieure n'est pas encore clairement définie, de l'autre la question de l'opportunité de ce degré se pose eu égard aux initiatives en cours en vue d'une prolongation de la scolarité obligatoire et de la création d'une "maturité moyenne". La place et la fonction de ce degré dépendent de manière décisive de la future structure générale de notre enseignement et ne peuvent pour cette raison être déterminées que dans une perspective qui se réfère au système global.

Le modèle du degré maturité

Le Conseil de la Science appuie la proposition de création d'un type de maturité unique se fondant sur un canon déterminé de disciplines obligatoires et de possibilités de spécialisation individuelles. A condition que le degré maturité garantisse une certaine envergure de la formation et des exigences élevées dans certains domaines, le Conseil de la Science rejette la conception selon laquelle seul le canon des branches actuellement valable peut donner une bonne formation générale. Il est d'avis qu'il existe aussi des domaines de la connaissance importants en dehors des branches de maturité actuelles et préconise pour cette raison un élargissement de l'éventail des disciplines du gymnase. On pourrait encore aller au-delà du modèle proposé et reconnaître d'autres disciplines comme branches de maturité dans le domaine des options. Il faut en principe arriver à ce que, tout en maintenant un niveau élevé et en gardant des disciplines obligatoires, les gymnases ne dispensent pas tous la même formation générale, mais que la formation générale puisse être différente selon les régions et les institutions conformément à une répartition pluraliste des accents.

C'est pourquoi la fixation et la justification de disciplines obligatoires et d'options, dans lesquelles les élèves peuvent se spécialiser dans une mesure croissante, ainsi que la répartition hebdomadaires des heures et dans l'année nécessitent des études supplémentaires. Dans ce sens, le Conseil de la science considère le modèle présenté comme une possibilité parmi plusieurs.

LA NOUVELLE MATURITE ET L'UNIVERSITE

Le but

Le Conseil de la science souscrit aux objectifs de la nouvelle maturité. Il préconise le type de maturité unique proposé, donnant accès de manière générale à l'université, et il soutient les buts sociaux psychologiques et d'individualisation de l'enseignement. Il est toutefois d'avis que ces derniers ne définissent pas encore l'ensemble des objectifs sur lequel doit porter le degré maturité.

Le nombre des bacheliers et la capacité des universités

Le développement des gymnases progresse sensiblement plus rapidement que celui des universités, qui se heurte maintenant à des limites financières. Une harmonisation quantitative et qualitative entre les deux secteurs ne s'est pas produite jusqu'ici, ce qui rend imminentes des mesures restreignant l'admission aux universités. Le Conseil de la science est d'avis que ce problème ne peut être résolu par la formulation d'une politique nationale en matière d'admission. Une étude approfondie des relations entre les gymnases et les domaines contigus dans les secteurs d'enseignement secondaire et tertiaire est nécessaire. Il faut en particulier examiner si l'on doit créer des types de formation courts pour les cadres moyens se basant sur la maturité et si de telles formations doivent être réalisées dans le cadre de l'université ou en dehors. Ce problème doit être résolu conjointement par l'enseignement secondaire, l'université et les responsables de la formation professionnelle. Des répercussions sur l'organisation du degré de maturité sont prévisibles.

La nouvelle maturité et le début des études

Le Conseil de la science est d'avis que l'introduction de la nouvelle maturité avec un catalogue des disciplines individualisé ne place pas les universités devant des obstacles insurmontables pour l'organisation des premiers semestres d'étude. Il faudra certes organiser de nouveaux cours introductifs et cours de rattrapage dans quelques disciplines. Mais cet inconvénient devrait être compensé par une meilleure préparation des étudiants débutants qui se sont déjà spécialisés dans la bonne direction au niveau du gymnase, ainsi que par une meilleure formation à la solution des problèmes et par une capacité d'apprentissage accrue. La ligne de démarcation nettement marquée actuellement entre le degré de maturité et l'université pourrait être assouplie en faveur de la création d'une zone de transition : suivant les circonstances et les possibilités concrètes, les cours introductifs pourraient être organisés en partie au gymnase, en partie à l'université.

Bases juridiques pour l'expérimentation d'écoles nouvelles

Le Conseil de la science est convaincu qu'avant son introduction générale, l'"enseignement secondaire de demain" nécessité une expérimentation approfondie et suivie scientifiquement. C'est pourquoi il préconise la création des bases juridiques nécessaires à l'expérimentation, sur les plans cantonal et fédéral. Ces bases doivent cependant garantir aussi aux élèves des écoles et des classes expérimentales des possibilités de diplômes de fin d'études et de continuation de leurs études.

Politique de la Science, N° 3/ 1974, p. 352 - 355

SWEDEN

REPORT ON WORKING CONDITIONS IN SCHOOLS

The Commission on Working Conditions in School (Utredningen om skolan inre arbete - SIA) was appointed in 1970 as the result of disquiet expressed in the late 60s concerning the functioning of comprehensive school. Besides work methods and organization, it was to examine such matters as measures in favour of pupils with special difficulties, decision-making procedures, co-operation in school matters, and the use of leisure time. Its chairman was Jonas ORRING, Director General of the Swedish National Board of Education, and representatives of various organizations and trade unions served as experts. In its final report, submitted to the Minister in charge of Primary and Secondary Education and Teacher Training, on 6 August 1974, the Commission presents the following proposals.

A restructuring of the school day

The Commission is of the opinion that the school day should be given a broader, more variegated content. Such a restructuring is necessary for educational reasons and in order to enable more attention to be devoted to pupils, particularly those with difficulties of various kinds. The school day should comprise fixed and free activities. Fixed activities would correspond for the most part to the present-day lessons, for which regulations are laid down by the Riksdag*. Fixed activities would alternate with free activities rather than the latter being tacked on in the afternoon session, and both would be obligatory for all pupils. Pupils should be offered voluntary activities of various kinds outside the school but under its auspices.

Although all pupils should have the same number of regular teaching periods for all the subjects in the curriculum, the length of the school day need not be the same in all municipalities. The local education authority would fix the length of the school day within minimum and maximum limits defined by the Riksdag. In the case of the lower and middle levels, the Commission envisages a minimum week which is somewhat longer than the present one, while the upper level week would roughly correspond to the time which pupils already spend at school. The working day of a particular school should, if possible, start and finish at the same times every day of the week.

There are several reasons for extending the school day :

- some 70 % of mothers with children of school age work and three quarters of the school children have no-one to look after them when they return home in the afternoon ;
- the school is well placed to offer facilities for the cultural development of the child ;
- help with homework could be provided as well as supplementary teaching for those in need ;
- a greater variety could be introduced into the work of the school.

The content of the school day, especially as regards free activities, neither can nor should be the same throughout the country. Nor should there be any centrally determined regulations concerning group sizes during free activities. It is proposed that responsibility for the pattern and content of the school day be vested in the local education authority. The Commission observes that time can be allotted e. g. for private study in libraries, for class committee and pupil committee meetings, for supplementary teaching, for voluntary music teaching and for activities during breaks.

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*Riksdag, the Swedish Parliament

Before and after the school day it should be possible for school premises to be used for voluntary activities and for activities connected with child care. Such activities might be sponsored by the local education authority or some other body. They could take the form of an enlarged recreation centre, as proposed by the Commission on Child Care Centers.

Work units to replace classes

The Commission considered at length the problem of the size of classes. It does not propose any general reduction in the number of pupils per class, believing that the significant factor is the size of teaching groups, not the administrative division of pupils into classes. Merely to reduce the size of existing classes by one pupil would be a very costly undertaking. In terms of increased expenditure on premises alone it would cost as much as all the improvements which the Commission proposes, proposals which it believes will be far more effective. The Commission does not feel that the size of a teaching group at a particular level or for a particular subject should be centrally determined. The size of the teaching group should be dependent on the pupils to be taught, their difficulties, the topics involved and the experience of the teachers.

A reallocation of the government grant-in aid is proposed in order to permit flexibility with regard to pupil groupings and in order to facilitate the implementation of the proposed school day. Under the proposed scheme, areas with many pupils, e.g. immigration areas, where problems are felt the most, will be given the greatest share of resources in order to help them surmount their difficulties.

School work is dominated at present by the single teacher system. This system poses many problems, for example how to give individual attention to a pupil in the class situation, and has led to the development of a parallel organization for remedial teaching which now involves roughly 40 per cent of the pupils (in 1952 just over 2 per cent). The system has also given rise to a methodology based on the written word, a methodology which creates considerable difficulties among large groups of pupils and its monotony can have a devastating effect on the motivation of many pupils.

Active work in various pupil groups requires the school to be organized into partially autonomous work units of varying size. For instance, it could include the same number of pupils as two present-day classes. It is proposed that the school management be allowed to determine the number of work units in the individual school.

The pupils within a work unit would belong to teaching groups of varying size and composition. These groups would not be streamed, although there would be nothing to prevent, for example, a number of children with reading disabilities being grouped together for special training. Such a group would only be retained for as long as it was needed. For purposes other than the teaching of reading the pupils would belong to other groups. At the lower and middle levels, the pupils in a work unit should be kept together in a "home" section of their own, insofar as premises permit.

Work teams to direct school work

The staff working within a work unit should be known as a work team. Pupils at the lower and middle levels would be taught by one such team, which would include teachers, remedial teachers and other staff, e.g. a recreation leader. At the upper level, where the subject teacher system applies, pupils would be taught by several work teams. Teachers should be allotted as large a portion of their duties as possible within the same work unit. The team should have included in its work schedule regular planning sessions at which the work to be done within the unit would be planned. This planning would take the place of the present class conferences. One teacher in each work team would be appointed study leader.

He would chair the meetings of the team, co-ordinate its work, see to it that team decisions are executed, inform the school authorities of pupils' problems, see to it that pupil groupings do not become too rigid, help less experienced team members and promote in-service training. The introduction of the study leader should be linked to the phasing out over a five-year period of the present system of senior subject teachers (heads of department).

The organization of pupils into work units and of teachers into teams would have distinct advantages over the present system :

- pupil groupings would not be immutable ;
- more individual attention could be accorded to pupils ;
- pupils would have a greater say in determining matters directly affecting them ;
- through work sharing fuller use would be made of teachers' special aptitudes.

The adoption of flexible work units would mean the disappearance of the traditional class teacher, his role as a focal point for a group of pupils being taken over by "contact teachers", part of whose working week would be set aside for contact with pupils.

Remedial programme for pupils rather than separately organized special teaching

If a school day is introduced which also includes scope for free activities of various kinds, and if the individual school is organized in smaller, partially autonomous units, the Commission feels that it would be possible to devise work and remedial programmes to meet the needs of the various pupils within a work unit. Among other things this means that remedial teaching should not be provided through a special organization whereby the pupil often has to leave his ordinary group and go to a clinic for supplementary instruction in a subject while the rest of his class is doing something else. The proposed organization would be likely to be more efficient, because help could be given when needed and for as long as it is needed. In this way too there would be no need for a pupil receiving special help to feel branded.

In present circumstances not only are children who attend special classes singled out by the very fact they attend such classes, they also have difficulty in reintegrating into the normal system. Furthermore, schools tend to be more concerned with finding places in special schools for pupils than in adapting their methods.

A comprehensive scheme of special in-service training in remedial teaching methods is proposed for comprehensive school teachers in order to enable more teachers to use such methods, that is, to work more easily in the everyday teaching situation with pupils who have various kinds of difficulty. It is recommended that some 5,000 teachers per annum be given four weeks' in-service training during the first five years. The teachers concerned would be given leave of absence with full salary in order to attend the courses, their duties being discharged by deputies. At present, there are some 7,000 teachers employed in special education about half of whom have not been appropriately trained.

Certain pupils with handicaps or other major difficulties need more help than can be provided within the ordinary work units. Special permanent groups - partly corresponding to the present remedial classes - would be arranged for them. There should be no central regulations concerning the minimum size of such groups, though they should not be larger than the corresponding present-day remedial classes. Pupils with serious adjustment difficulties could also be cared for in school day-care centres, school week-day homes and social co-ordination centres.

Certain pupils are unable to profit from school activities. For these it should be possible to devise tailor-made courses of study which could be both school- and non-school-based with whatever methodology that might be appropriate being used. This possibility should be available at all secondary levels, but especially for older pupils.

Encouraging pupil interest

The pupils should be enabled to play an active part in shaping their working environment. School should not be an institution which merely provides services, with its pupils as passive recipients of those services. Pupils should be given charge of various practical tasks, including those which help to create a more pleasant school environment. They should be given responsibility for younger children at school, for example in their studies, in the transition to a new level and the like. They should not merely absorb facts. Pupils should play a part in the meetings and consultations dealing with teaching matters and with the school environment generally. Pupils at the upper level of the comprehensive school and in the upper secondary school should be entitled to participate in decision-making.

Every pupil should automatically be a member of the pupil association at his school. The school's pupil council should comprise one representative per corresponding unit at the upper and middle levels of the comprehensive school. The School's management committee should be empowered to delegate various tasks to the pupil council.

A management committee in every school

The management committee of a comprehensive school would comprise the head as chairman, three teachers, one non-teaching member of staff and two parents. For an upper secondary school the director of studies (deputy head), an additional teacher and two pupils would be included. The management committee would not deal with matters governed by agreements, matters concerning an individual officer or questions concerning the choice of subject matter and methods.

The teaching staff council as a statutory form of assembly should be abolished and replaced by a staff conference comprising all employees at the individual school.

Readiness - an outmoded concept

Research in the field of developmental psychology has shown that the term "readiness" should not be used in the manner which has hitherto been current. The Commission feels that the Education Act should be amended in such a way that schooling cannot be deferred once a child has reached the statutory school age of seven years. Instead of organizing school readiness classes, schools should tailor their activities to the varying requirements of their new pupils. Obligatory registration of pre-school aged children should be introduced before formal schooling commences. Schools and parents should take this opportunity to exchange information.

Initiatives should be taken on behalf of children even before they start school. It is already possible, by means of tests and observations, to discover amongst four-year-olds problems likely to result in difficulties at school, it being often too late to start compensatory education at age six years for it to have a lasting effect. Introductory periods could be arranged for pupils reaching a new school level. Conferences could be held between their former and future teachers with a view to exchanging information. Teachers at one level could spend a brief period teaching at another level.

At all levels schools should concentrate more on giving their pupils a thorough grounding in the skills of each subject. A greater element of practical work and experimental study is needed.

Attendance compulsory

The Commission emphasizes that one of the essential preconditions for the success of school work is for the pupils to be present. As at present attendance should be made compulsory at both the comprehensive school and the upper secondary school. Absence should be reported whenever possible in advance by the parents of the pupil concerned, though in upper secondary school this would be done by the pupil himself. Schools should have proper records of absenteeism.

Parents at school

The Commission calls for improvements in the co-operation between the school and the home. Every parent should be entitled to compensation for loss of earnings in order to be able to visit school for one day per child and level. During such visits, parents would be able to take part in information meetings and discussions. Compensation for loss of earnings should be provided out of public funds through the family insurance scheme. It should also be made incumbent on comprehensive schools to hold two class meetings per term. It is also to be made the duty of schools to give all parents the opportunity of fifteen minutes' private conversation with the "contact teacher" concerning their children. The State should provide local authorities with extra resources at the rate of Skr 5 (1 Swedish Crown = (approx.) US $ 0.22 or FF 1,09) per pupil and year to meet expenditure in connection with parental contacts at the comprehensive school.

Youth organizations and other bodies should be given financial support for the design of courses providing basic training for school functions, for example, relating to free and voluntary activities. Persons who have completed an approved course of training for supervisors should be entitled by law to four hours' absence per week (200 hours per annum) from their work in order to take part in free activities in schools. School allocations for free activities should be used to compensate for loss of earnings.

Special training should be arranged for pupils and parents having special tasks in schools, for example members of school management committees.

The training of headteachers

The traditional role of the head would become out-of-date with the introduction of the Commission's proposals. He would work in close collaboration with the management committee, seeing to it that its decisions are implemented.

For the Commission's proposals to be implemented, improved training for headteachers is needed. The Commission proposes that, with effect from the autumn of 1975 all newly appointed headteachers should undergo compulsory training for 16 weeks. Half this period should be devoted to practical training in sectors relating to school. It is proposed that headteachers who are already appointed should attend a compulsory training course lasting five weeks. This training course should be made optional, however, in the case of headteachers over 60 years of age. All headmasters should attend a compulsory two-week in-service training course every five years.

The Commission proposes that persons qualified for permanent teaching appointments at a school should be eligible for headteacher posts.

A more versatile teacher role

The work of the teacher should not be exclusively concerned with learning, the personal problems of the pupils being referred to other staff categories. Successful teaching requires, among other things, a thorough knowledge of one's pupils. The proposed courses in remedial teaching methods should be a help to teachers in this respect. A teacher must also be able to take part in contact work and free activities, work done within and outside the formal teaching setting being regarded as of equal importance. The Commission

proposes that the government should instruct the National Collective Bargaining Office to open negotiations with the teacher unions with a view to modifying the teaching duties to take account of the organization recommended. At present, a teacher's duties are defined in terms of the number of periods he has to teach every week. Over and above these periods the teacher has to perform other duties, for example attend conferences and keep in touch with the pupils' homes. Efforts should be made in the course of the new negotiations to agree on a maximum limit to working hours, so as to provide teachers with an assurance that their total work input will not increase even if their other teaching tasks are changed and expanded.

The Commission emphasizes that not all teachers are to be active in all the roles that are needed in school. But the organization of school work on the lines it proposes will give teachers better opportunities to assume tasks suited to their personal interests. Should the number of pupils in a municipality decline, teachers would probably even so retain their posts since there would be other tasks available besides taking lessons.

The Commission's proposals entail the creation of some 3,600 new employment opportunities in schools - for teachers, recreation leaders and others.

Supplementary personnel

As in the case of the teaching staff the role of the social assistant should not be too rigidly defined.

School psychologists ought as a rule to work in close contact with the teaching teams and be able to participate directly in the work units. They should above all participate in measures on behalf of pupils who experience difficulties at school. They should also have preventive tasks in the school environment. Like school welfare officers, they should work both in the comprehensive school and in the upper secondary school.

School libraries should be open and accessible to pupils all day, even if library staff are not always available. The fact that books may sometimes disappear is a marginal item of cost in relation to the advantages of an open school library. The tasks of the school librarian should be primarily of an educational and advisory nature. Technical tasks should be allotted to other staff categories. Ultimately it may be possible for specially trained librarians to be appointed in the comprehensive school as well as in the upper secondary school.

Evaluation of school work

The Commission's proposals imply the conferment on local authorities of greater liberty in the deployment of school resources. In consequence they should also be made responsible for the evaluation of activities. It should be the duty of each school management body after it has distributed resources within the school to follow up events, evaluate the effects of the work done and take steps for the improvement of activities when necessary. The Commission proposes that a period at the end of each school year be devoted to evaluation in which everybody in the school - headteacher, staff and pupils - should participate. At the end of a year a pupil's results should be compared with the goals set for the courses he has followed, these goals having initially taken into account the pupil's ability.

Upper secondary school

The Commission investigated various difficulties connected with the transition to the upper secondary school, including the difficulties experienced by remedial class pupils. Improved and more extensive practical vocational guidance is proposed for pupils encountering special difficulties in the completion

of their schooling and vocational education. Upper secondary schools should provide comprehensive schools with more information about the educational opportunities they have to offer. Experimental introductory courses should be organized for undecided pupils with very little educational interest. It is proposed that admissions boards be provided with pupil counsellors who would co-operate with study and vocational guidance staff in schools in following the progress of each generation of pupils. It is also proposed that special officers be appointed at the county employment boards to collaborate with schools in helping pupils who have not continued their studies after comprehensive school. A review should be undertaken of the vocational education methods in the upper secondary school.

Implementation and costs

The Commission recommends that its proposals be implemented over a five-year period, starting on 1 July 1976. The Commission's proposals are designed in such a way as to form an integral whole, the various detailed proposals supporting each other. A transition to the proposed system must entail the adoption of all its component parts. Furthermore, the transition must be effected simultaneously in all school districts and schools within the individual municipality. Headteacher training and further training in remedial teaching methods should commence as early as 1 July 1975.

The Commission's proposals will entail additional costs to the State amounting to Skr 239.5 million per annum during the transitional period 1975 - 1980. The subsequent permanent annual increase in State expenditure will be Skr 146 million. The rise in municipal expenditure is estimated at Skr 60 million per annum. The total increases in costs are greater than this, account having been taken of the fact that the Commission's proposals will result in a number of savings. For example the greatest saving will be effected by the abolition of departmental headships in the comprehensive school over a five-year period. This will result in a saving of Skr 45 million per annum.

Special in-service teacher training in remedial teaching methods will cost approximately Skr 40 million per annum during the transitional stage, and training courses for headteachers will cost about Skr 10 million. The permanent cost of the latter will then be Skr 7 million per annum. The introduction of study leader appointments for comprehensive school work units will cost Skr 50 million per annum. Support for pupils encountering difficulties in the transition to upper secondary school and working life will cost Skr 10.9 million per annum. It will cost Skr 30 million p.a. to enable parents to attend information meetings, etc. at school for one day per level and child under the family insurance scheme. Increased efforts in connection with contacts between the school and the home and between the school and voluntary associations will cost Skr 11.2 million per annum. All of these figures refer to increases in state expenditure. Further expenditure at the municipal level is also entailed.

Press Communiqué, Swedish Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs

The report has been widely distributed to interested parties who have until 1 June 1975 to submit their comments. These comments will be considered by the government which will put forward proposals for legislation by spring 1976. The new reforms could enter into force in the 1977 - 1978 academic year.

UNITED KINGDOM

PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION POLICY

We reproduce below extracts from an article by Mr. Gerald FOWLER who during the period February-October 1974 had special responsibility in the Labour government for higher education. From 1972 to 1974 Mr. Fowler was professor of educational administration at the Open University. The article written in September 1974 as a contribution to the election campaign, looks back at the achievements of the Labour Government since it took office in February 1974 and sets out the political line to be followed in future.

Education policy since the February General Election has undergone a fundamental transformation. Educational rather than political issues are again dominant. It may seem hard to believe, but it is just over six months since the Labour Government took office. Priorities have changed sharply. Of course, some decisions that have been taken about provisions at local level might well have been taken by a Conservative Secretary of State. That merely demonstrates what we all understand, namely that many educational policy decisions are of a managerial nature and are therefore bipartisan. Nonetheless, in the remarkably long list of achievements of the Department during the present administration, there are those which show clearly the difference between a Labour and a Conservative Secretary of State.

There are three decisions which demonstrate this irrefutably. Firstly, there is the £ 1 million the Secretary of State has found to develop adult literacy. This was a decision taken,as were our other decisions, in conditions of the most extreme economic stringency. It would have been easy to have ignored all those who quite rightly have been emphasising the need to direct resources to remedying adult illiteracy. The Secretary of State chose not to forget them, but to find money to make these people capable of living in a society which demands of everyone the capacity to read and write. The alternative use for this £ 1 million was in the universities. The decision is therefore a mark of the priority which the Labour Party attaches to those in social need compared with those who within the education system have been the aristocracy (measured by the resources devoted to them).

A second fundamental decision was the introduction of legislation to make awards for the Higher National Diploma mandatory rather than discretionary. This again manifests the philosophy of the Labour Party, which is determined to recognise the rights of students taking vocational courses, or studying for qualifications at below degree level.

Thirdly, there is the £ 31 million programme to replace or improve primary schools mainly in urban areas. The previous administration planned building for 'basic needs' alone. Once again the Secretary of State took a difficult decision, to divert some of the 'basic needs' money to those whose need was greatest, namely the poor children in inner city areas, to the tune of £ 11 million and persuaded the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find more than £ 20 million to add to that £ 11 million to provide a substantial programme of improvements, the benefit of which will go to those children most in need.

If we consider longer-term decisions, I suppose that the most crucial was to set up the Houghton Committee to consider teachers' pay. The present Government has given teachers top priority in its pay policy. Once again it would have been easy to fob them off with less than their due. Instead, the Secretary of State insisted that teachers must begin to catch up the more fortunate industrial workers, and all education ministers in the last Government are confident that that is what will follow from the Houghton inquiry.

The Secretary of State also found £ 10,8 million to help teachers in schools of special difficulty. This, above all, shows where our philosophy differs from that of the Conservatives. The Labour Party's intention is, wherever it is possible, to free resources for those most in need.

I should refer briefly to our other achievements : the issue of Circular 4/74 on comprehensive education and the encouragement (if that be the right word) of progress in abolishing the 11 plus ; the setting up of the special units on Under-achievement and Disadvantage at the Department of Education and Science (DES) to measure the effects of policies designed to benefit the disadvantaged ; the increase in the intake of students to the Open University (with cash provided) ; the announcement of the Government's intention to rid us of sex discrimination in, not least, education ; and the maintenance of the Nursery Education Programme. The extent of Ministers' achievements within the past six months would do them credit if they were the result of five years - the normal length of a Parliament.

We ought now to consider policies of the new Labour Administration. Above all, we believe that education should be given a high priority ; education must get its share, or more than its share, of the limited resources available nationally. Nonetheless, we cannot ignore the grave economic problems confronting us ; no one should assume that the education service can be totally protected from the need for restraint in public expenditure.

The distinctive mark of our education policy over the next five years will be the reconsideration of priorities; resources will be shifted in favour of the disadvantaged. We have done this during the past six months ; we shall continue to do the same in the future, notably by continuing the Nursery Programme, the work in favour of adult literacy and numeracy, and the provision of funds for building improvements in deprived areas.

We shall also try to complete comprehensive reorganisation within the next Parliament. If necessary, we shall legislate to end the 11 - plus selection, and we shall certainly bring the direct grant system to an end. This means that some of the school-building improvement and replacement programme will have to be devoted to secondary schools. In a number of authorities this will facilitate the more rapid conversion of secondary education to the comprehensive pattern.

Although we shall not neglect the needs of higher education, I am determined that the scandalous neglect of non-student youth of this country shall no longer continue. We shall, however difficult it may be, devote resources to their needs. As to how to do it, we have already had consultations with a large number of interested parties. The difficulties are manifold, but we shall not be deterred. Come hell or high water, we shall provide a comprehensive educational system for the 16-19 age group. Those older than this will not be forgotten ; I am determined that the 'lifelong' or 'recurrent' pattern of education shall replace the 'childhood' or 'apprenticeship for life' structure.

We shall, of course, reform the present quaint system of government and management of schools. Here we make no easy promises. I have advocated for many years teacher and parent representation on governing bodies. It must, however, be effected in such a way that parents and teachers have a worthwhile role in determining what happens in their school - and that includes financial power. Talking-shops are of no avail.

In education, we stand for two principles above all. One is a fair chance for the underprivileged, whatever their age or sex. The other is the fundamental democratic right that the voice of the parent, the teacher, the student, and the local community shall be heard. If you can take a horse to water without making it drink, it is the latter process which is in consequence all-important.

Education is not just for the people ; it should be of the people and controlled by the people. In the end, educational principle will triumph over social prejudice.

Education, 4 October 1974